the trail
discover Darlington’s heritage...
Darlington Town Centre Heritage Trail

This is a self-guided heritage trail, which is fun for all ages including school groups - adults and children enjoy doing the trail together; following the map in the centre of the guide and the ‘coin’ markers in the pavements. The clock tower on the ‘coins’ points the way: Silver coloured coins mean straight on and Gold ‘coins’ are for turning left or right. Silver coloured wall plaques on buildings tell you what there is to see in each area.

Some of the items refer to former buildings but we tell you where to look. Use your imagination and enjoy discovering Darlington’s heritage through historical facts and fun anecdotes, with a quiz to see what you’ve learned at the end of the guide. Please take care with traffic but remember to look up, there are some lovely buildings above some rather ordinary-looking ground floor shops and offices.

The trail starts outside the Town Hall on Feethams and takes about 1½ - 2 hours to complete (without the optional detours), but can be easily done in smaller sections. It is accessible to most pushchair and wheelchair users as we have used dropped kerbs where possible, though some areas are cobbled.

Some refreshment stops on the trail are shown by the symbol and there are plenty more to choose from. The symbol is for venues which are accessible to wheelchair users and have an accessible toilet. There is a RADAR toilet at the side of the Dolphin Centre with keys available, for a small fee, from the Darlington on Disability office on the corner of Horsemarket/Feethams.

If you want to take part in a guided trail (Spring and Summer months only), local businessman Alex Blackham does much-enjoyed voluntary tours. Please contact him directly on: 07791 096039 or email blackham.smith@btopenworld.com to book.

The Heritage Trail is now also a Multi-cache Geocaching Trail with a final location to find and should be completed using this guide, and for those cachers completing the Trail there is a special graphic which can be downloaded for their own geocaching profile page. Further information is at www.negeocachingsupplies.co.uk/index.php?route=information/information&information_id=10 where a link to the Multi-cache can be found.

Enjoy our Heritage Trail!

Telephone 01325 388664 or email business.support@darlington.gov.uk
1 Town Hall

Start your voyage of discovery in front of Darlington Town Hall on Feethams. Although it is a fine example of 1970s architecture, not everyone likes it – do you? It was opened on 27th May 1970 by a young HRH Princess Anne, who was wearing a mini skirt, the fashion of the day!

Image: HRH Princess Anne & John Hoskins at the opening of the Town Hall

2 ‘Resurgence’ Sculpture

Facing forward, with the Town Hall behind you, to your left on the forecourt is ‘Resurgence’, a sculpture designed by artist John Hoskins. It rather baffled local folk when it was unveiled in 1970 but Hoskins went on to become Professor of Fine Arts at Leicester University. The sculpture celebrates Darlington’s recovery after the closure of the railway industries on which the town relied.

3 Dolphin Centre

The large building opposite you, with the three silver dolphins on the side, is the award-winning Dolphin Leisure Centre. It was built in 1983 and opened by Sir Roger Bannister who ran the first sub-four minute mile in 1954. The design of the new centre had to fit the existing Central Hall into the heart of the new building. Central Hall is Grade II Listed and dates back to 1846 when it was Darlington’s main meeting room. In 1896 it had an exciting role to play when it was used for Darlington’s first cine screening. Can you believe that by 1939 Darlington had the most cinema seats per head of population in the UK?
4 Market Place
To your left is Darlington Market Place. If you’d lived here in the 10th Century, you would have seen a little Saxon church somewhere in the Market Place before St Cuthbert’s Church was built. More recently the square held Darlington’s twice weekly markets until 1994 when it was redeveloped to create a new open space for large-scale events and festivals. Around the square are several things showing Darlington’s pride in its railway heritage:

- Rail tracks set into the roads at the entrances to the square
- Hanging baskets, benches and brackets with a wheel design

5 St Cuthbert’s Church
Optional detour
On your right is Grade 1 Listed St Cuthbert’s Church. You can enjoy looking at it from here or go inside (check opening times on the board). At the end of the trail we bring you back to the church to see it from a different angle. St Cuthbert’s dates back to 1183 and it was the first early English-style church in County Durham. It was named after St Cuthbert whose sacred bones passed close to Darlington but it is known locally as ‘The Lady of the North’. When the floor was re-laid in the 1800s about 300 skulls were found in graves inside the church. Local legend says that Lady Jarratt was murdered nearby by Civil War soldiers, who stole her gold ring. Her ghost is said to sometimes sit on the churchyard wall - have you seen her?

6 Church Seating Area
To your right is a circular Seating Area in front of the church. During the redevelopment of the Market Place archaeologists found the bones of 32 people from Medieval Darlington. They are now buried under the ‘Locomotion’ wheel-shaped metal inlay.
7 The Pennyweight

Cross the rail tracks which are set into Church Row, over to the Grade II Pennyweight pub. A common bakery was located here in the 18th Century where people could bring their pie or loaf to be baked and pay for it by weight, giving the term ‘pennyweight’. The pub is located on Bakehouse Hill which also takes its name from the bakery. Prior to that it was known as Smithie Hill after the blacksmith's forge located here, as well as a pillory, gallows and a bull baiting ring. Look around and try to imagine the hustle, bustle and stench that must have been here! More recently, in 2002, HRH Queen Elizabeth II visited Darlington, during her Golden Jubilee Tour. A granite flag set in the cobbles of the Market Place, in front of the Pennyweight, commemorates her visit.

8 The Bakehouse

Walk to the end of the 'hill', now just a gentle gradient, to number 3 - 5 on the corner. The Bakehouse moved here in about 1820 and its original ovens still stretch out many metres under the pavement.

9 Hole in the Wall

Cross to the opposite side of the Market Place to the Edwardian Hole in the Wall pub. It has an attractively tiled frontage and has been on the Market Place for generations - no one knows exactly how long. Some think it takes its name from a hole in Darlington’s Medieval boundary wall. William Longstaffe suggested it comes from the book of Ezekiel in the Bible! Local athlete George Butterfield, “Butt”, was once the landlord of the pub. He ran the fastest mile in the world in 1906, and represented Great Britain in the 1,500 and 3,000 metres in the 1908 London Olympics. Sadly he died on the Somme in 1917. In fine weather the 'coin' pavement marker may be hidden by the cafés set out on the Market Place.
10 Bennet House
The building on the corner of Horsemarket, at number 14, next to the pub is Bennet House. It is a good example of a 3 storey 18th Century town house with a ‘Gibbs-type’ doorway, framed with projecting stonework. It is Grade II Listed. The street name, Horsemarket, shows a link to Darlington’s live animal markets. See how many more Darlington streets on the trail have animal names.

11 Bull Wynd
You didn’t have to look far - here we are already in Bull Wynd. High on the wall ahead is a stone bull with a 'shovel' tail. It is the emblem of the Bulmer family whose names show on the lower stone. Anthony Bulmer married Mary Lasenbie in 1665 and together they ran an inn close to this site. Be careful here as Bull Wynd is a road, not a pedestrian street.

12 Pease House
The building on your right facing onto the grassy area is Pease House. It was once the home of Edward Pease, who was a key promoter of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. He was known locally as the ‘Father of the Railways’.

13 Heritage Fountain
The grassy area on your right is Bull Wynd Garden, which originally belonged to Pease House. It now has an attractive 1858 Grade II Listed Heritage Fountain at its corner. The fountain was relocated here from the gardens of Southend, which was the home of Joseph Pease.
14 Chancery Lane
Chancery means ‘court’ and Chancery Lane runs along the Western side of Bull Wynd Garden. Darlington’s first Railway Solicitor and prominent citizen, Francis Mewburn, had his offices here.

15 Market Cross
This is Darlington Market Cross. It’s a strange name isn’t it for something which looks more like a column? When Dame Dorothy Brown presented it to Darlington in 1727 it was located beside a market tollbooth on the site of the current Market Hall. After being shut in storage for several years it was restored and located here in 1993. Time capsules with works from local school children and artefacts of the day are buried under its base. Wouldn’t it be fun to travel to the future and see someone find them?

16 Old Town Hall
The building ahead of you, with its small balcony and grand entrance door, was Darlington’s Town Hall until 1970. In October 1967 HRH Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip visited Darlington to celebrate the town’s centenary as a county borough and waved to crowds from this balcony. It is now part of the Market Hall itself.
This is the attractive Grade II Listed Victorian Market Hall. Why not take an optional tour around it to see, touch and smell Darlington’s market heritage? You will get to meet some of the characters who run the stalls.

Darlington’s market tradition comes from the early 17th Century. It is still important today and in 2008 Darlington won the UK ‘Market of the Year’ award.

Before 1800 there were 12 ‘shambles’ (narrow cobbled streets) south of the market tollbooth. They had fish stalls and a butter market, adding cattle, sheep, horses, hogs, pigs and even cats in the 18th Century. Seasonal shows and merchants selling linen, cloth, leather and metal items also boosted market trade.

By the 19th Century the market facilities had become inadequate and there were growing public health concerns. In 1854 Darlington Council purchased the market rights for £7,854.19s.4d and built this Victorian Market Hall for £16,356.8s.9d. It was designed by the relatively unknown Quaker architect, Alfred Waterhouse. Waterhouse went on to fame, designing Manchester Town Hall and the Natural History Museum in London.

Ahead and to your right, stretching high above the town centre, is Darlington’s most famous landmark, the Clock Tower. The clock was a gift to Darlington from Joseph Pease. The clock face was produced by Cooke’s of York and the tower bells were cast by Warner & Sons of nearby Norton-on-Tees, who also cast the original 1856 London Big Ben hour bell, which later cracked and had to be replaced. Luckily Darlington’s bells are still going strong! From here either turn left and take the steps up to High Row or take the ramp, clearly visible to the right of the water feature, Market Cascade.
You are now going to explore Darlington’s **Yards & Wynds**. These are Medieval-like lanes which are very typical in Darlington. They link High Row to Skinnergate. Much of this area was lost to fires in 1585 and 1759, which destroyed the bulk of former Elizabethan Darlington. Today the area has been revitalised; many buildings are Listed and some are occupied by small independent businesses and an open-air public art gallery has been created here.

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**19 Market Cascade**

**Market Cascade** was designed by artist Michael Pinsky. In 2009 the Fountain Society awarded it joint first in the ‘Best New Fountain or Water Feature in the UK in the Last Five Years’. The water and red granite ‘barcode’ design represents the washing away of the blood from the cattle markets which used to be held on High Row and from the slaughterhouse in Skinnergate. The barcode design also symbolises the town’s link to retail trade.

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**20 High Row**

This is **High Row**, Darlington’s most well known street. High Row was on the Great North Road from London to Edinburgh until 1965 and has seen all sorts of traffic, including horse drawn carriages. In the 1860s Darlington was only the third town in the country to have a horse-drawn street tram, which was replaced by an electric tram in 1904. In 2007 it became pedestrianised as part of a major scheme to improve the town centre.

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**21 Yards & Wynds**

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22 High Row, No 22

Before you turn into Post House Wynd please look at the Regency style building on your right, on the corner at No 22 High Row. Although not Listed, it is of local interest and is estimated to be from the early to mid 1900s.

24 Preslands former

Just before you turn left into Buckton’s Yard look at the entrance to the shop on your left whose mosaic entrance tiles say ‘Preslands’. This was a unisex hair salon in the 1940s and 50s. In an earlier life the building was once a brewery, as were several others on this street.

23 Post House Wynd

Post House Wynd is the largest and most well-known Darlington wynd. It is named after the Post House Inn which used to be on High Row. The inn’s stables extended into the wynd. An arched gateway on your right before the café shows where these stables were located.

Bowls, which dates back 7,000 years to ancient Egypt, was probably played in the wynd for several centuries on a green which was the back yard of a pub. In the mid 19th Century the Firth Ale and Porter Merchants had their business in the wynd. By the mid 20th Century the Italian ice cream makers, the Di Paulos, known locally as ‘Diplos’, set up business in the wynd. Today it is home to many small independent businesses.

As you walk along, look up to see the different rooflines and styles of buildings; some date back to the 18th Century. At the end of the wynd turn left on to Skinnergate.
25 Buckton’s Yard

Buckton’s Yard houses some of the artworks in Darlington’s ‘Art in the Yards’ open-air gallery. Other artworks are in Clark’s and Mechanics’ Yards. The large scale pieces on display are the work of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College students.

Buckton’s Yard was originally called Colling’s Yard because Colling’s grocers owned property here in 1780. In the mid 1800s it changed to White Swan Yard after a pub at its Eastern end and has had at least 3 other names. The present name dates from 1832 and comes from John Buckton, a Director of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. He was known locally as ‘Nancy’ for his unusual walk and love of gossip!

In 1881 the yard housed a brothel and its poor reputation led the Council to close the housing in the yard down in the 1900s.

The yard has a ‘finkle’ (Scandinavian for elbow or bend) half way up it. Finkles happened where the gardens of houses on High Row and houses on Skinnergate met unevenly in the middle. After the finkle continue down the yard to come back onto High Row through a narrow archway. Walk a few paces along High Row and then turn right into Clark’s Yard.

26 Clark’s Yard

Clark’s Yard is the best preserved of Darlington’s yards and has many original features. These include a rainwater head close to the High Row entrance showing the mark ‘JP 1767’. This was originally the side of John Pease’s 1750s house. Later it was owned by the Herald newspaper, you can still see the hoist at head height, which was used to haul heavy newsprint rolls.

27 Pease’s Wine Merchants

Pease’s Wine Merchants used to be located at number 8 Clark’s Yard and its wine cellars are still underneath the current shop, which carries on the wine tradition.

The walls of number 8, and number 11 opposite, are ‘chamfered’ or scooped out. This allowed horse-drawn carriages to pass in the narrow finkle.
28 Victorian Well \textit{former}

At the corner of the cycle shop on your left, look for a semicircular cut in the stone paving, close to the shop wall. This marks the site of a former early Victorian well, which was located here and was found when the yards were repaved.

29 Clark’s Stables

In 1745-6 there were stables at the Skinnergate end of Clark’s Yard, which housed Hussar troops on their way to the Battle of Culloden. Records show that 10,000 troops camped out on the Green Tree fields behind Skinnergate on their way up to the battle. When news came back of the victory, many Darlington townsfolk boasted of their morale-boosting night-time role in that victory! The stables location inspired student artist Alex McDonald’s ‘Clark’s Stables’ artwork, which shows three amazing life-size horses.

30 The Bowes \textit{former}

Turn left coming out of Clark’s Yard but before you turn into Mechanics’ Yard note the buildings on either side. Number 81 on your left was the 20th Century offices of Messrs Bowes & Sons. By the mid 1960s it was the Bowes pub where North East musician Chris Rea played in his early days.

31 The Mechanics’ Institute \textit{former}

On your right, number 82 was the Mechanics’ Institute. It was built in 1854 as an educational facility for the working man and was designed by Joseph Sparkes. The Institute’s original role has been lost over time and the building has since been a bank, then a series of bars.
32 Mechanics’ Yard

Mechanics’ Yard, was previously ‘Farmer’s Yard’ after Farmer’s the booksellers on High Row. Later it became ‘Betty Hobson’s Yard’, some say Betty’s ghost haunts the yard. It was renamed Mechanics’ Yard, when the Institute opened on Skinnergate in 1854. Walking down this yard you will pass the Quaker bar on your left which was a series of cottages where cottage industries flourished including a watchmakers, which inspired the artwork here, ‘Timepiece’, just before emerging back onto High Row.

33 Binns

Binns is an impressive, but non-listed, 1930s building, one of the original ‘Binns’ department stores. It was founded in 1807 by George and Henry Binns, Quaker drapers. The House of Fraser acquired it in the 1950s and chose to keep the historic ‘Binns’ name. The pneumatic chute till system was a marvel to see in its day when customers’ money went back and forth to a central cash desk out of sight.

34 Joseph Smythe Gunmaker

Joseph Smythe’s gun store was located roughly where Binns department store starts on Blackwellgate. Joseph, a well-known gunmaker, made weapons for the nobility. A huge explosion at his store in 1894 reduced buildings on High Row, Skinnergate and Mechanic’s Yard to rubble. Amazingly his shop front survived, but sadly his young apprentice, Thomas Howe, aged 14, died from the blast. Darlington’s most well-known architect of the day, GG Hoskins, was also injured in the blast whilst visiting nearby Skinnergate.

35 Life Pulse

‘Life Pulse’, a sculpture by Michael Pinsky, is made up of five high white columns, topped with lights. Put your hands on the columns and it will ‘read’ your heartbeat and flash the lights on top of the columns accordingly. Please cross the road on the other side of the sculpture, at the dropped kerb, taking care for traffic from the right and the nearby bus stop.
36 Black Bull Inn former

The public house on the corner of Blackwellgate was once the site of the Black Bull Inn. It is said Sir Walter Scott based the Black Bear Inn from his novel ‘Rob Roy’ on this inn. He used it as the setting for the fictitious encounter between Francis Osbaldistone and Rob Roy MacGregor Campbell.

Image: Black Bull Inn

37 Grange Road

Grange Road was once on the Great North Road; today it is one of Darlington’s shopping streets with independent shops, businesses and Continental cafés.

38 La Bamba former

Above numbers 25-31 Grange Road was the La Bamba nightclub. A staircase to Alton House, between a small restaurant and an interiors shop, marks its former entrance. The club opened in May 1963 and was famous for its superior sprung dance floor. It staged the top pop stars of the day including Tom Jones and Engelbert Humperdinck but sadly never re-opened after a fire in 1968.

39 Surtees & Co former

In the 1960s Surtees & Co wine merchants had their business at the last shop on this side of the street. Their wine cellars are believed to still be underneath the shop. Go around to the side of this building to see its mock Tudor side and attractive stained glass windows at first floor level.
40 Sloan’s

In 1907 the building on the opposite side of the street was Sloan’s Billiard Room. Its name is carved into the art nouveau stone façade. The entrance and the staircase feature over twenty Victorian Craven Dunnill wall tiles and pictorial panels of national importance.

41 The Old Police Station

Number 10 - 14 Grange Road was The Old Police Station until 1868. It is now sub-divided into smaller businesses. If you step back a little (be careful of traffic) you can see from the roof line that it was once one building.

42 Thomas Watson & Son

From the mid 17th Century to the early 20th Century, Northumberland Street (apart from number 2) was originally the gardens for the properties on Coniscliffe Road, which runs parallel to your right. Thomas Watson & Son, at number 11, is the oldest established auctioneer in the region. Auctions have been held in Northumberland Street since 1840.

43 Imperial Centre

The Imperial Centre, which continues around the corner into Coniscliffe Road was originally a Temperance Hotel in Quaker times, when drinking was frowned on. In 1887 it was renamed the Imperial Hotel to commemorate Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee. Guitar legend the late Jimi Hendrix played in the Bolivar Bar of the hotel on 2nd February 1967. Don’t you wonder what the Quakers would have made of that?
44 North of England School Furnishing Company former
Before you cross busy Coniscliffe Road ahead, look over at the building which curves around the corner. It was designed in 1895-7 by GG Hoskins as a grand office and shop for the North of England School Furnishing Company. Look up above the ground floor level to see why it is Grade II Listed.

45 County Court
On your right is an 1866 Italian Renaissance-style building, now the County Court. The Court function was previously undertaken from the Old Police Station on Grange Road before it moved here in the 1950s.

46 St Augustine’s Presbytery
On your right is St Augustine’s Presbytery. Although a private property, they are happy for you to call for an introductory booklet to nearby St Augustine’s Church.

47 Home of William Hogarth former
Number 40 is the former Home of William Hogarth, a local priest who became the first Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. He lived here from 1824-1866.
48 St Augustine’s Church  Optional detour

The gates on your right via a short lane lead to St Augustine’s Church, an optional detour. The Parish of St Augustine’s was established in 1783 and land for the church bought for £55 in June 1825. Designed by Ignatius Bonomi, its architectural style is referred to as ‘Debased Gothic’. It opened on 29th May 1827 and was extended in 1865 by Father William Hogarth during his time as Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. Retrace your steps back down the lane to Coniscliffe Road and back to the North of England School Furnishing Company (number 44).

49 Skinnergate

Turn left into Skinnergate. Some of Darlington’s oldest buildings are found here, which is Medieval in origin. Its inhabitants were mainly occupied in the leather trade, giving the street its original name ‘Skin Market’. Limekilns found here dating from Medieval times were probably used to tan the skins. It must have been a busy and smelly place in those days! The street later became Skinnergate. ‘Gate’ is from the Medieval Danish ‘gata’, meaning street. Many Darlington street names end in ‘gate’ showing the Scandinavian influence.
50 Friends’ Meeting House
In 1662 there were only 15 Quakers in Darlington and they met in private houses, risking harsh penalties. Their first Meeting House was built on Skinnergate in 1668. By 1760 they had bought additional land and built two meeting rooms. The property was enlarged in 1839 and the present frontage developed as the Friends’ Meeting House.

Until the 1830s Quakers were excluded from many areas of public life. They were at first influential in the wool and linen industries in Darlington, later they became active in the new coal, iron, and engineering industries. They also became bankers.

By the mid 19th Century there were many wealthy Quaker families in Darlington but not many showy properties. As members of the Society of Friends they stuck to their code of ‘relative modesty in worldly goods’.

As bankers Quakers were also the key financial investors in the Stockton & Darlington Railway and influenced the making of ‘Locomotion No 1’, the world’s first passenger-pulling steam engine. You can see ‘Locomotion’ at Darlington’s Head of Steam Railway Museum.

The building is normally open to the public between 10.a.m. and 2.p.m. on weekdays. The main weekly Meeting for Worship, which is open to anyone who wishes to attend, is at 10.30.a.m. on Sundays.

51 Quaker Burial Ground
Optional detour
Take an optional detour to the tranquil Quaker Burial Ground, which is accessed via large wooden gates at the side of the shop adjacent to the Meeting House. The gates show the sign ‘2-5 Skinnergate, Almshouses’; just gently push them open if they seem closed. A short lane towards the Almshouses leads to the burial ground on your left. In fine weather it is a calm place to sit and relax on one of the wooden benches. You may walk on the grass to view the headstones of the most famous Quakers, from the Pease and Backhouse families. Close to the back wall on your left lie Edward Pease, the ‘Father of the Railways’ and Joseph Pease, Darlington’s first Quaker MP. His name is under that of his wife, Emma Pease, with whom he shares his final resting place. If you do visit the burial ground, please then retrace your steps back to the gates and turn left along Skinnergate.
52 Skinnergate, Nos 11 & 12

Numbers 11 and 12 Skinnergate are to the right of British School Yard. Today they are two modest shops, which are however both Grade II Listed. Number 11 is the oldest building on the street, dating from about 1700. It was built to house Doctor Peacock, who visited his patients in a sedan chair. Number 12, built around 1750, housed another local doctor, who hosted Methodist preacher John Wesley on his last visit to Darlington in 1788.

53 Punch Bowl Yard

To your left is Punch Bowl Yard. An 1848 Board of Health report shows 15 Irishmen died from an outbreak of typhus in this yard. A subsequent outbreak of dysentery claimed a further 89 lives. Until the 1970s, a slaughterhouse was located behind Number 20, tying in with the heritage of nearby Skinnergate. Darlington’s oldest pub was also located here, reputedly frequented by sailors: why were they so far from the sea?

54 G Iannarelli

Look down at the floor mosaic tiles at the entrance to the small café on your left at number 22. They show the name G Iannarelli. The Iannarelli family came to Darlington in 1902 where they met the Rocco Rea family who had an ice cream business. It seems likely that the Darlington Reas were related to the Redcar Reas, from whom legendary musician Chris Rea descends. By 1910, having learned the ice cream trade from the Reas, Guiseppe Iannarelli opened this ice cream parlour, now a cosy café, which has newspaper cuttings inside about the Iannarelli family history.
55 Duke Street

Duke Street takes its name from the Duke of Cleveland. His Green Tree Estate was behind Skinnergate and took in Duke Street as well as other smaller streets. Old photographs of the street from the early 1900s show a William Woodall had his Pastrycook and Confectioner’s shop here. Today it is popular for eating out and shopping.

56 Gallerina

Darlington’s biggest art gallery, Gallerina, is located at Numbers 33-37 and its attractive façade spreads across three former Victorian town houses. Cross busy Duke Street a little further ahead at the dropped kerb.

57 Duke Street, No 12

About half way down Duke Street is Number 12. It is Victorian and has one of the few original frontages on Duke Street.

58 Birthplace of J M Dent

Optional detour

The Birthplace of J M Dent was number 1 Archer Street, which is now part of the Grade II Listed Britannia Inn, across the ring road to your left. Dent, a young bookbinder, travelled to London and went on to found the world-famous ‘Everyman’s Library’. A painting of him and his library, by A R Thomson, can be viewed at Darlington’s Crown Street Library.
59 Bondgate

Bondgate takes its name from the Middle Age term ‘bondmen’, who were tied to working on their landlord’s land. When the Bishop of Durham made Darlington a market town, some remained bondmen living in Bond Gata (Street). The founder of the Potts clock firm, William Potts, was born in 1809 in nearby Salt Yard, just off Bondgate. A 1901 Potts clock is located in Darlington South Park.

60 Lavericks former

Just after the start of the 20th Century the Laverick Brothers built their confectionery shop on the first floor of numbers 5 - 6, in mock-Tudor café style.

61 Joseph Pease Statue

Ahead of you the attractive Grade II Listed Monument is a statue to Joseph Pease, presiding over a new events space. Designed by Scottish sculptor G A Lawson, it was unveiled in 1875 as part of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. It commemorates Joseph Pease, a local businessman and the UK’s first Quaker MP. It shows him in middle age wearing typical Quaker clothing. Four panels on the plinth show the key causes which Joseph believed in: politics; industry; education and anti-slavery. Rumour has it that Joseph walks High Row on New Year’s Eve…
62 King’s Hotel
Ahead of you is the Grade II Listed Kings Hotel. In 1661 it was a coaching inn when Northgate was on the Great North Road and has hosted some of the richest and most famous people in the land. Grandly rebuilt in 1891-1893 by local architect G G Hoskins, it has a superb façade, which was partially damaged in a major fire in 2008. It was re-opened in 2012.

63 Prospect Place
The white building to your left on the corner of Prospect Place and Northgate is an early 20th Century commercial building in modified baroque style. It dates back to around 1901 when it was the York City and County Bank and offices of the North Eastern Insurance Company when Prospect Place then had the more appealing name ‘Sun Row’.

64 Northgate, No 37-43
To the right of the Queen Street Shopping Centre entrance at Nos 37-43 Northgate, above the modern shop fronts, is a wonderful Art Deco style façade. It was designed by architects George Baines & Son of Westminster.
65 Crown Street Chambers former
The date above the door of Grade II Listed Crown Street Chambers shows 1880. Architect G G Hoskins designed and built it as the home for the stockbroker Councillor William Harding.

66 Todd Brothers Drapery & Soft Furnishings former
In 1902 Todd Brothers Drapery & Soft Furnishings occupied the row of shops across the street with the decorative ceramic tiling. A former arched entrance was once used for horse and carts. They are Grade II Listed and were used to represent Emma Hart’s Emporium in a TV adaptation of Barbara Taylor Bradford’s novel ‘A Woman of Substance’.

67 Edward Pease Free Library
Ahead on the corner of East Street and Crown Street is the attractive Edward Pease Free Library, now Darlington Library. You can see the Pease family coat of arms above the door. Edward Pease (1834-1880) was a Quaker and a merchant in the family wool firm. He left £10,000 in his will to build a free library for Darlington. The original library was started in 1884, opened on 23rd October 1885 and extended in 1933. Can you see where the old and new buildings meet? As you walk along Crown Street, passing the library, look left to see a glacial stone with a plaque alongside it. W T Stead, who was the editor of The Northern Echo, tethered his horse to this stone in the 1800s.
68 Pease Mill

Pease Mill was owned by the Quaker Pease family and gave employment to hundreds of local people. Its location was behind the library and where the multi storey car park is today, on the banks of the River Skerne. Sadly there are no physical remains of this piece of history which was demolished in 1984. However, remains of the mill race were discovered beneath the library building during recent building work.

69 Northern Echo

This building is where The Northern Echo newspaper was established in 1870. It was the UK's first ha'penny daily newspaper. Its outspoken editor from 1871-1880, was the 22 year old W T Stead. He campaigned for women’s rights and against child prostitution. He tragically drowned in the 1912 Titanic disaster and the William Stead pub opposite is named after him. Continue up Priestgate to cross the Road at the dropped kerb opposite the Cornmill Shopping Centre entrance, taking care with heavy traffic from your left.

70 Red Lion

The Red Lion pub, a Grade II Listed building, was designed in 1903 by G G Hoskins, using fine tiling and stained glass features. A number of decorative elements of past styles survive including a stable yard entrance. It was common in the era of turnpikes for such inns and hotels to provide meals, drinks and accommodation for man and beast.
71 Backhouse’s Bank
To your right, on High Row, is Backhouse’s (now Barclay’s) Bank. This is a splendid building with an attractive façade, which has been compared to a Venetian palace and is Grade II* Listed. In 1774 prominent Quakers James Backhouse and his sons founded their bank and these premises, designed by Quaker architect Alfred Waterhouse, opened in 1864. It became Barclay’s in 1896 and still has a wonderful roof garden, unfortunately not open to the public.

72 Doric House
To your right on the other side of the street, the tall building with the attractive façade at first floor upwards is known as ‘Doric House’. It is Grade II Listed but is somewhat of a mystery as its origins are not really documented. A plaque on it says: ‘A unique example in Darlington of cast iron structure’.

73 The Tubwell
Close to the Cornmill Centre entrance, is The Tubwell, a decorative Victorian-style water pump, sometimes partially hidden by shrubbery. It marks the site of one of Darlington’s first public wells, documented in 1545 when Darlington had the nickname ‘Darnetont-Apon-The-Well’. The Tubwell was vital to public health because the River Skerne was at the time little more than an open sewer. A 19th Century well was discovered at this site during a 1992 repaving exercise.
74 Cornmill Shopping Centre

On your left is another entrance to the Cornmill Shopping Centre. This was an ambitious project for Darlington as it had to architecturally fit around existing businesses and buildings. It covers a large site encompassing Priestgate, Prebend Row and Tubwell Row. The centre featured extensively in Paul Whitehouse’s TV comedy series ‘The Fast Show’.

75 Darlington Museum former

The building on the opposite side of the street on your right, with the word ‘Museum’ in raised lettering over a late 19th Century doorway is Grade II Listed (eastern part only). It dates back to the Post Medieval period and has been built using an unusual presentation of bricks with the short ends, rather than the long, facing outwards. It was once a weaver’s cottage, later Darlington’s local history museum, now an office.

76 St Cuthbert’s Bridge

The bridge ahead over the River Skerne is St Cuthbert’s Bridge, known locally as ‘Stonebridge’ for its stone-built predecessor. Records confirm a bridge has spanned this site since 1343. In the early 1700s author Daniel Defoe called it “a high bridge over little or no water”. 1940s fishmonger Geordie Fawbert is said to have stored fish leftover from his stall at Darlington Monday Market in coal sacks in the River Skerne. They say he then went on to sell it at nearby Middlesbrough at their Wednesday market!
77 War Memorial
The 1905 Listed War Memorial in St Cuthbert’s Church grounds honours the fallen in the 1899-1902 African War. It is a life size bronze figure of a rifleman climbing a hill on a rough plinth of Shap granite. The Monument was unveiled in 1905 by General Lord Roberts.

78 Royal Free Grammar School former
The former site of the Royal Free Grammar School is marked by a plaque on the church wall, close to the small footbridge over the River Skerne. When the school was demolished, the site became part of the church’s grounds. The Grammar School moved to Vane Terrace and became the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College in 1970.

79 Bishop’s Palace former
In 1164 the Bishop’s Palace stood on the site of the current Town Hall and car park, in ‘Fetholmes’ (Feethams) Meadow. The meadow extended east, up the hill towards Bank Top Railway Station. After the palace was demolished in 1806 it became the site of the town’s poorhouse which was partially demolished in 1828 and finally destroyed in 1870. Now follow the trail markers back up towards the Town Hall ahead to return to your starting point.
Quiz

1. Which mini-skirted lady formally opened the Town Hall in 1970?
2. Which ghost is said to sit on St Cuthbert’s Church wall?
3. Where did the name Bakehouse Hill come from?
4. What kind of tail has the bull on the plaque on Bull Wynd?
5. What is buried under the Market Cross?
6. Who waved to crowds from the balcony of the Old Town Hall?
7. How much did it cost (in old money) to build the Market Hall?
8. Which artist designed the Market Cascade?
9. In which yard is the painting of three life-size horses?
10. What does the ‘Life Pulse’ sculpture do when you touch it?
11. When was Sloan’s built?
12. What did Skinnergate get its name from?
13. Where is Joseph Pease buried?
14. Who created the ‘Everyman’s Library’?
15. What was Darlington library originally called?
16. Where was Pease’s woollen Mill located?
17. Which famous Darlington editor drowned when the Titanic ship sank?
18. Which High Row building is said to look like a Venetian Palace?
19. What is ‘The Tubwell’?
20. Where did fishmonger Geordie Fawbert store his fish?
We hope you have enjoyed the Darlington Town Centre Heritage Trail and Geocoaching Trail and that you have found out a lot more about Darlington and its heritage.

Produced by Darlington Business Engagement
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